

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK
MAYOR & COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2018

MINUTES

Mayor Brill Mittler called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor; Council (except Councilman George); Borough Administrator;
Borough Clerk.

Borough Administrator Jover noted that the Finance Committee has met to discuss the water and sewer situation.

Councilman Fine noted that the Finance Committee came up with three options:

- Keep proposed property tax increase at 2.47%
- Deal with the deficit of the water and sewer problem by charging a one-time surcharge to be paid by December 31st.
- Raise rates to where they should be based on fact that Middlesex Water Company raised their rates as approved by the BPU.

Borough Administrator Jover prepared four different handouts for this meeting:

1. Proposed rates using average usage from 2015 to 2017.
2. Surcharge calculation to cover deficit in 2018.
3. Scenario based on actual 1st Quarter consumption for the Mayor, Council and Borough Administrator.
4. Budget sheet depicting municipal budget, library budget, county budget and school budget and the average tax bill for 2017 based on assessed value.

Discussion about sheet #3 depicting the actual increase for the members of the Governing Body based on their consumption. A typical household in Highland Park falls into the Tier 3 category for consumption. Middlesex Water Company uses average consumption to project their rates. Discussion about better management of the water and sewer department and the possibility of selling the system.

CFO Gardner noted that over the years, the water and sewer utility surplus was used to balance the municipal budget. Borough Clerk Hullings added that in past years, the Superintendent of Water & Sewer had a particular license that the current Superintendent does not. The former Superintendent was very involved in meter reading, billing and collection.

Suggestion was made to eliminate the Assistant to the Borough Administrator position for 2018. It was consensus of Council to not fill certain positions to free up funding in the budget.

Council agreed to the following:

1. Water and sewer rate ordinance okay to be introduced.
2. Surcharge ordinance okay to be introduced, but they would like to see the amount for the surcharge reduced to around \$120.

There being no further business, on motion made by Councilwoman Foster-Dublin, seconded by Councilman Hersh, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

MAYOR & COUNCIL CONFERENCE MEETING
MINUTES – 4/10/18

Joan Hullings
Borough Clerk